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Harold E. Morehouse Flying Pioneers Biographies Collection - Johnson, Walter

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from the ice, to become quite possibly the first lady passenger to make a flight in New York State. Miss Scrafford later became Mrs. Johnson. In March, Johnson and the Thomas Brothers left Bath for New Orleans, Louisiana, for a two months exhibition tour of Louisiana and Mississippi. There Johnson made many successful flights at fairs and carnivals, but soon learned that more power was needed to operate out of small fields under adverse conditions.

As a result the Thomas Brothers returned to Bath and started the construction of an all-new plane with a 6 cylinder Kirkham engine. Johnson completed the southern contracts and returned to Bath on May 11th, 1911. Following test flights of the new plane later that month Johnson made the very first successful airplane flights in the vicinity of Buffalo, New York, where he flew at Fort Erie Beach during the week of June 7th and then for the week of June 19th at Ontario Beach Park. Following this Johnson returned to Bath for more test flights, then gave an exhibition at Warren, Pennsylvania, on July 4th. August 6th he flew from Savona, New York, to Hammondsport to pay Glenn Curtiss a visit, then returned to Savona. On August 7th Johnson started a week's exhibition engagement at Dansville, New York; August 19th he was at Lake Lodore, Pennsylvania; and on August 23rd at Butler, Pennsylvania. Starting August 28th he made daily flights at Hornell, New York, then appeared at Carlisle, Pennsylvania, on September 27th.

During the late fall of 1911 preparations were made to start a flying school and in January, 1912, Johnson began instructing off the ice of nearby Lake Salubria, using a machine fitted with a novel dual control arrangement for training. The instructor and student each had his own seat with identical complete controls side by side but separated by some two or three feet. His first students were Earl Beers, Frank Burnside, Charles Niles, Ralph Brown and D. C. Patmore. That Spring floats were fitted to this plane and hydro instruction was also given. The school expanded, the company started to build additional planes, and in the Spring of 1912 Johnson again flew exhi-

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